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ABSTRACT

This feasibility study sought to determine the need and the appropriateness of a self-contained training package which would help existing leadership programs integrate youth with disabilities into their services. The study involved a review of the literature; interviews with 19 experts and practitioners; focus group discussions to solicit student opinions regarding leadership, disability awareness, and integration of youth with disabilities into leadership structures; and development of preliminary design specifications for the training package. The intended target audience for the training package is the leadership programs (both school-based and independent) which seek to teach leadership skills to regular students. The training materials, to be developed in a later phase of the project, will include an accessibility inventory, a videotape about the possibilities of inclusive programming, a facilitator's guide, and a participant's handbook. Support for the training package from national networks of leadership organizations is reported. Appendixes include a bibliography of approximately 55 items and a copy of the interview instrument. (JDD)

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An Investigation of Leadership Development Options for Youth with Disabilities

FINAL REPORT

Phase I

U.S. Department of Education
SBIR Contract #RN92158008

VSA
Educational
Services

EC 302074

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An Investigation of Leadership Development Options for Youth with Disabilities

FINAL REPORT

Phase I

U.S. Department of Education
SBIR Contract #RN92158008

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INTRODUCTION

VSA Educational Services undertook this Phase I feasibility study to determine the need and the appropriateness of a self-contained training package which would help existing leadership programs integrate youth with disabilities into their membership. This Final Report incorporates the findings of our Phase I research effort during which we conducted an extensive review of the relevant literature, interviewed experts and practitioners across the country, and worked with our Design Team to develop preliminary design specifications for the proposed package. All these activities reflect the proposal submitted by VSA Educational Services for Phase I funding and establish the necessary research base for the full-scale development of the package during Phase II.

FUNDING

Funding for the Phase I feasibility study was provided through the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program of the U.S. Department of Education. A renewal of the contract for Phase II is being sought to implement the design plan created under Phase I.

OBJECTIVES

The activities of Phase I explored the viability and possible content of the training package. In undertaking this feasibility study, we sought to:

1. Identify key components of existing youth leadership programs.

2. Identify barriers that inhibit participation by persons with disabilities.

3. Design a self-contained training package which will mitigate these barriers and increase involvement of people with disabilities in leadership training.

4. Identify dissemination channels through existing leadership programming to deliver training package.

SUMMARY OF PHASE I ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Toward meeting the objectives of Phase I in determining the viability of the proposed product, VSA Educational Services successfully accomplished the following:

- Identified, reviewed, and analyzed the salient literature on leadership development;
- Identified and interviewed the top practitioners and researchers in the fields of leadership, education, psychology, and disability;
- Conducted and observed focus groups to elicit youth opinions of leadership and inclusion of youth with disabilities into mainstream programming;
- Held a Design Team meeting to reach a consensus in establishing fundamental principles to guide development of the content of the training package; and
- Surveyed delivery and dissemination options.

The ensuing chapters elaborate on these accomplishments and indicate their relation to the framework of existing research and practice in leadership training for general audiences. The findings recorded in the following pages outline the need for a self-contained training package which will help administrators, facilitators, and participants of existing mainstream leadership programs make their organizations accessible to youth with disabilities.

Chapter 1

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

By extending civil rights protection to persons with disabilities, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) significantly affects all the nation's estimated 42 million persons with disabilities. Its implications for youth with disabilities are perhaps most far reaching and historic. It promises the next generation greater opportunities for full integration into the societal mainstream. However, to realize this promise, young people with disabilities must take a strong *leadership* role to publicize and promote their rights under the law as well as to overcome age-old myths and widely held assumptions about the limitations imposed by disability. This call to leadership presents both an enormous challenge and an incredible opportunity for the disability community in general and for young people in particular. It also places an added responsibility on existing leadership organizations to ensure that their programs are accessible to youth with disabilities. To help meet these challenges, VSA Educational Services undertook this study of the state-of-the-art of leadership training across America to determine how we could assist existing leadership organizations in making their programs truly inclusive. The following background information serves as a basis of our design plan for the proposed training package.

STATE OF LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Over the course of the last twenty years, the concept of leadership and the number of youth who are considered potential leaders have been expanded. No more do researchers, practitioners, and educators consider leadership as an activity that an individual performs exclusively in group situations nor do they view leadership roles as the exclusive purview of the gifted and talented. This expansion in the concept of leadership comes from the realization that traditional definitions reflect the way individuals and groups approached leadership. Most of the traditional approaches rely on situational or circumstantial development of leadership qualities. Research demonstrates that when new approaches are developed then leadership training is beneficial to most of the population. Dr. David P. Campbell of the Center for Creative Leadership chronicled this evolution in methodology. He noted that the traditional approaches included:

> . . . a constellation of personal traits ("She's a born leader"), or as a characteristic of environment ("The reason nothing ever happens around here is that we don't have any leadership"), or as a reflection of some bottom-line outcome ("That team won again; clearly they have great leadership"), or as the embodiment of visible power ("he's a great leader, a real 'take-charge, out-front' type guy"), or as a process of empowerment ("Of the true leaders, when, their work is done, the people will say, 'We did this ourselves'"). (Campbell 1991)*

Campbell further noted that approaches to leadership involving systematic training minimize personal traits, situations, and environmental characteristics. This conclusion also led Campbell to redefine leadership as "*actions* which focus *resources* to create *desirable opportunities.*" (Campbell 1991) This definition also allows for the exercise of leadership singly or in groups and the involvement of individual or corporate resources.

Other studies support Campbell's argument. They have also identified leadership training as a necessary part of everyone's personal development. Researchers at the Kettering Foundation, the Center for the Study of Citizenship at Syracuse University, the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh, and Duke University have noted that leadership education should be included in everyone's education. (See bibliography in Appendix A.) According to Prof. Edward H. O'Neil of Duke University, "public leadership education must be a part of the education of all citizens if we are to have a democracy which truly functions as a dynamic entity always working to improve life." (O'Neil 1990)

Despite this recognition among researchers and program developers that leadership training should be available to all youth, most leadership programs target young people who have already displayed some type of leadership ability. This practice has convinced most youth that leadership falls to those who are exceptionally gifted or talented, stumble into leadership roles as a result of outside circumstances, or are cast in these roles by society. Dr. Carl Fertman and Ms. Josephine A. Long of the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh found:

> High school students often seem to adhere to myths and fallacies about how a person becomes a leader. For example, many believe what is commonly known as the "great person" theory of leadership: Leaders are born, not made. The claim is that inheritance and destiny make a limited number of people leaders, that only those of the right upbringing can lead, like John Kennedy and Eleanor Roosevelt. Another common notion is the "big bang" theory; namely, that great

* The works cited throughout this feasibility study are included in the Bibliography in Appendix A.

> events make leaders of otherwise ordinary people. According to this theory, Martin Luther King, Jr., was simply there when the civil rights movements began and it propelled him to leadership. Although such theories as these are inadequate in describing leaders and leadership, they permeate the thinking of high school students. (Fertman & Long 1990)

As noted by Fertman and Long, these perceptions are the principal barriers that prevent youth with and without disabilities from developing their leadership potential. If students believe the possibility of becoming a leader rests with circumstances beyond their control, they are less likely to develop the initiative and motivation to spur them into leadership roles. This passive or 'state orientation' affects all aspects of their lives from school work to the later job search. It inhibits cognitive development, especially communications and decision-making skills (Kuhl 1981).

Conversely, students who are taught that personal initiative and motivation enhance their ability to be leaders generally show a greater educational development and degree of success after they leave school. This expectancy-value theory of motivation was postulated by the psychologists J.W. Atkinson and D.A. Birch in 1970 (Atkinson & Birch 1970). It was subsequently applied to leadership education by T. Dary Erwin and Susan T. Marcus-Mendoza, researchers from James Madison University and Texas A&M University, respectively. Erwin and Marcus-Mendoza found that ". . . the higher the expectancy of attaining a goal by a certain action, and the higher the perceived value of that goal, the higher the motivation tendency to perform that action." (Erwin & Marcus-Mendoza 1988)

The potential benefits of leadership training for mainstream and at-risk audiences have spurred the development of programming tailored for general audiences. Prominent examples are the MAPS (Maximizing Adolescent Potentials Program) project sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh and the National Youth Leadership Council, a network of leadership programs across the country. In addition to these programs, other projects like Youth Build and the National Indian Youth Council have targeted at-risk and minority populations.

For these programs, the first challenge is to dispel myths about leadership development and then to teach participants to raise their personal expectations and sense of value. Most programs work to build confidence and move individuals from passive positions into active roles through experiential activities. After building an individual's self-confidence, programs teach participants to transfer this learning experience to activities and relationships within the program and subsequently in the community. As articulated by John Bell, Leadership Director for Youth Build, these programs first seek to move individuals from passive or state orientation and then to develop motivation and initiative in ever-increas-

ing circles of acquaintances (i.e., from participants in the program to the community at-large).

LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

For youth with disabilities, motivation and initiative deficits are more pronounced and are frequently ingrained by the time an individual starts school. A 1981 study found that qualities like problem-solving and communication skills, self-confidence, and sense of responsibility are first developed at home and "the development of such attributes will ultimately result in personal fulfillment in conjunction with societal contributions" (Hillman & Smith 1981). A supplementary study on parenting and leadership found that those children whose parents worked with them toward developing self-confidence, problem-solving skills, etc., are more apt to develop leadership skills regardless of ability or disability (Meriweather & Karnes 1989). Unfortunately for youth with disabilities, parents generally attempt to accommodate their children's deficits or attempt to shelter children instead of working with them to develop their potential. Meriweather and Karnes concluded that for all children:

> Emphasis should be placed on areas cited by parents as weaknesses in leadership development for their children. This may involve providing more experiences in the home that would allow the child to develop a balance between extreme authoritarian behavior and passive behavior. Opportunities for developing patience and good communication skills would also be of value in building leadership potential in the home. (Meriweather & Karnes 1989)

Because of this lack of personal initiative development in the home during the formative pre-school years, many youth with disabilities come to be viewed by themselves, their peers, and teachers as unable to develop leadership ability. As noted in the 1978 landmark study of "learned helplessness" syndrome, this perception is derived from individuals' belief that they have little or no control over their personal circumstances. The perceived lack of control subsequently affects both cognitive and motivational development (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale 1978). Individuals who show symptoms of learned helplessness are more likely to have underdeveloped problem-solving and decision-making skills, as well as remain passive in most group situations. Among adolescents with and without disabilities, learned helplessness often exacerbates withdrawal from society. According to Prof. Frank Bowe of the Department of Counseling, Research, Special Education and Rehabilitation at Hofstra University, society has taught people with disabilities to be passive and dependent. He further notes that this ". . . message has taken hold, and remains dominant, despite all efforts to wean dependent individuals with disabilities from it." (Bowe 1992)

While no one doubts the prevalence of dependence among people with disabilities, studies and model programs within the last 15 years have shown that the effect of learned helplessness syndrome can be reversed by providing leadership training for people with disabilities. From 1979 to 1983, the Charles Stuart Mott Foundation with the Michigan Council of Independent Living Programs conducted model leadership programs involving residents from Ann Arbor, Ypislanti, Lansing, Grand Rapids, Holland, Kalamazoo, Saginaw, Midland, and Lake Orion, Michigan. These programs included people with mental and developmental disabilities, head injuries, cerebral palsy, quadriplegia, paraplegia, blindness, and deafness. The result of this pioneering work was to recommend the development of a structured leadership program for people with disabilities. In a report to the Mott Foundation by the Institute for Educational Leadership, Inc., researchers concluded:

> A leadership development and training plan must be developed which focuses on improving skills for program and community activities, as well as skills to take on activities in the mainstream. Such a plan would include: broadening skills for planning and management of independent living (fiscal and program management, public relations, legislative representation, leadership skills, fund development); recruitment and training of new leaders . . . . linkage with other leaders (internships and fellowships with other disability rights organizations and with major institutions to enhance the credentials of disabled leaders). (Funk, *et al.* 1984).

Follow-up activities from 1983 to 1986 by the Mott Foundation used leadership training as a means to empower people with disabilities to develop independent lives. The result of the program was a change in attitudes by participants and an "energy" devoted to establishing and reaching goals (Mott Exchange 1986). Indeed, a subsequent study by the [Minnesota] Governor's Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities found that leadership and self-determination skills are interdependent:

> Self-determination will depend on the leadership of young people with disabilities. We have said that self-determination is the capacity and opportunity to make choices about one's life, to have a reasonable measure of control over one's circumstances, to solve one's own problems, and to be responsible and accountable for one's actions. Self-determination involves developing individual skills and shaping society's institutions--or to put it another way, self-determination is about both private life and public service. Thus efforts to promote self-determination must be concerned with the development of diverse leadership talents among all youth. (Erickson, *et al.* 1991).

Supporting this report are the advances in self-determination and leadership ability among people with disabilities seen in programs like Project Empower, a program administered by the Prince George's County (Maryland) Private Industry Council, Inc., and funded by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), U.S. Department of Education; and Project Interdependence, a model program funded by the Administration on Developmental Disabilities, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which seeks to erase the legacy of segregation and low expectations for people with disabilities.

Unfortunately, leadership and self-actualization programs which only involve people with disabilities have found that participants are less likely to maintain their active roles when placed in integrated settings. For this reason, the Mott Foundation study attempted to involve the participants in its study in community organizations. The coordinator of the project, James Magyar, noted that this involvement further strengthened the abilities of the participants and led to increased integration into the society mainstream (Mott Exchange 1986). More recently, attempts have been made to create leadership programming which is inclusive of both youth with and without disabilities. An innovative program is *Project P.I.E.* (Participation, Independence, and Empowerment of Youth through Leadership Development). Funded by a three-year grant from the Federal Administration on Developmental Disabilities and administered by the Arc of Northern Virginia, this program brings together youth with and without disabilities to participate in a five-day summer leadership camp. During the five days, youth are taught interpersonal communication skills, cultural and disability awareness, and team-building. Another successful program has been developed by the Ridgedale YMCA in conjunction with the school system at Minneapolis, Minnesota. Like *Project P.I.E.*, the Ridgedale program seeks to involves youth with and without disabilities.

While these programs have actively integrated youth with and without disabilities into their programming, their efforts have been hampered by other considerations. Mainstream youth consider the programs to be for people with disabilities and express fear of being stigmatized by participating in a program operated by a disability organization. In the case of *Project P.I.E.*, facilitators have attempted to overcome this stigma by using recruiting techniques that appeal to the mainstream students' sense of altruism. The facilitators have recruited mainstream youth by stating that their presence will benefit youth with disabilities. To help alleviate the problem of labeling, the sponsoring agency of *Project P.I.E.* changed its name from the Association for Retarded Citizens to the Arc of Northern Virginia.

Conversely, leadership programs geared toward general audiences traditionally have very little participation by youth with disabilities. Though these organizations frequently have non-discrimination policies in regard to people with disabilities, they frequently cite the lack of means to iden-

tify potential participants and adapt programming to meet the demands of integrated settings. Despite the notable absence of youth with disabilities in mainstream leadership programs, the facilitators of these programs acknowledge a common goal of developing self-actualization and empowerment skills to all youth. As Katy Harriger and Michael Ford of Wake Forest University note:

> Students need to push out the boundaries of their experience and encounter for themselves the bigger and more complicated world which they will soon inherit. Students need to get off campus, out of their sheltered and insulated surroundings, and see the world for what it really is. (Public Leadership 1989)

Our first-hand research indicates that most existing leadership programs are receptive to expanding their audiences to include youth with disabilities and that integration into mainstream programs is the most effective means to help youth with and without disabilities fully develop their leadership skills. The first step in the inclusion of youth with disabilities into mainstream programs is a practical means to address the concerns of both the staffs and participants of individual organizations. In the activities undertaken as part of this feasibility study, VSA Educational Services identified those concerns and possible ways to address these and other barriers which have prevented the integration of youth with disabilities into mainstream organizations. These activities are detailed in the next chapter.

Chapter 2

PHASE I ACTIVITIES

The activities described below indicate the process by which VSA Educational Services developed the initial design specifications for a self-contained training packet for existing leadership programs on integrating youth with disabilities into their membership. The purpose of these activities was twofold:

1. To determine the current state of leadership education for adolescents, the components of leadership training, and the best means to integrate youth with disabilities into existing leadership programming.

2. To develop a preliminary design plan for a training program which could be used by existing leadership programs to help them make their organizations truly inclusive of youth with disabilities.

Toward these goals, VSA Educational Services:

- conducted an exhaustive search of the literature;
- identified experts and practitioners in leadership, education, special education, program development, and related fields;
- developed an interview instrument;
- selected and interviewed experts and practitioners;
- conducted focus groups involving youth with and without disabilities;
- investigated delivery and dissemination options;
- conducted a Design Team meeting;
- drafted a preliminary design document; and
- compiled a final report.

Before embarking on these activities, we held meetings with the executive staff of the Council for Exceptional Children, Maximizing Adolescent Potentials (MAPS) Program, President's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities, and Youth Service America to seek their advice regarding the design and execution of the study. They reviewed our initial proposal and suggested revisions, as well as submitted names of experts and practitioners for consultation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

VSA Educational Services undertook an exhaustive search of resources related to education, leadership training, program development, and learning and motivation theory. This review included online search of the following databases: Dissertation Abstracts, ECER (Exceptional Children Education Resources), Education, ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center), InfoTrac, PsycLit (Psychological Abstracts), and Sociological Abstracts. Subjects searches for monographs and analytics were conducted through ALADIN, the online catalog for the Washington Area University Consortium which includes Galludet, George Mason, George Washington, and Georgetown universities.

From this review, we found that the research on leadership training is very diverse and has broadened with the extension of leadership education to mainstream youth. Different branches of leadership research include:

- reports on leadership initiatives developed for specific constituencies;
- basic principles of leadership training;
- sociological and psychological profiles of group dynamics or of individuals in leadership and 'subservient' roles; and
- quantitative analyses which seek to determine patterns in leadership development.

These areas of research are represented in several major professional journals. Reports on specific constituencies are found in *Exceptional Children*, *Gifted Child Today*, and *Journal of Learning Disabilities*. Basic principles and practical information on leadership are frequently reported in the *Journal of Education*, *School Counselor*, *Roeper Review*, and *Journal of Counseling and Development*. The last two categories of research are covered in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, and *Psychometrika*.

In addition to these journals, research on leadership has been reported in monographs and special reports. These reports include: *Public*

Leadership Education, a compilation of concept papers by experts across the country which outline the skills and abilities needed by youth to develop leadership abilities; *Challenges of Emerging Leadership: Community Based Independent Living Program and the Disability Rights Movement*, which outlines the need for leadership in the disability movement, and *The National Indian Youth Leadership Model*, which addresses the need for leadership developed within a specific ethnic group. Monographs like the *Art of Leadership* are basically how-to manuals for leadership training.

To supplement the published research, we contacted researchers in the fields of education, leadership training, program development, and learning and motivation theory to obtain copies of pertinent works in progress. We also contacted the major national leadership programs to obtain copies of their reports and program and curricular materials. The resultant bibliography is included in Appendix A.

Despite the diversity within leadership development literature, certain basic themes recur that address the basic structure of training. The principal themes are that leadership education benefits all young people and that leadership can be exercised in situations when a person acts singly or as part of a group. These themes acknowledge the need of all people to enhance the skills which lead to independence and self-actualization.

DEVELOPMENT OF INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT

The next stage in the feasibility study was the design of an interview format to guide discussions of the proposed product with experts and practitioners in the fields of education, leadership training, program development, and learning and motivation theory. This format was engineered to cover all aspects of the feasibility study (such as definition of leadership, discussion of existing leadership programs, and experience working with youth with disabilities) and to stimulate discussion. However, the interview protocol was kept flexible so that the conversation could focus on the interviewee's individual experience and expertise. This format featured open-ended questions and allowed us to evaluate concepts identified in the literature search as well as to solicit new ideas and practices.

A copy of the interview instrument in included in Appendix B.

IDENTIFICATION OF EXPERTS AND PRACTITIONERS

To ensure a thorough knowledge of practice and theory in leadership training, VSA Educational Services interviewed nineteen major practi-

tioners, program developers, and researchers. The criteria for selecting interviewees included:

- experience in leadership programs,
- experience working with youth,
- experience working with people with disabilities, and
- experience in program development.

In selecting interviewees, we identified persons who had expertise in at least one or more of these areas with the principal concern being their current involvement in leadership training either in mainstream or disability-oriented settings. The experience of each interviewee in years by the above categories is outlined in Charts 1-5.

As part of the selection process, we identified persons who represented the diversity of the target audience. We made contact with and interviewed persons who coordinate youth leadership programs for Afro-American, Hispanic, and Native American populations. As noted by the President's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities' Adviser on Leadership and Empowerment, Claudie Grant, Jr., these groups have a higher proportion of people with disabilities than the rest of the population. By broadening our understanding of the nature of leadership programming among different ethnic groups, we hope to identify specific needs of minority youth with disabilities, thus ensuring that the projected product is culturally sensitive. In addition, we also attempted to interview persons who had experience with different demographics, and our interviewees represent urban, suburban, and rural programming; school-based and independent organizations; gender-neutral and gender-based training.

Based on these considerations, we identified 23 candidates for interviews and conducted nineteen interviews. Of the interviewees nine represented national leadership organizations, three schools, and six local or regional leadership programs. Among the interviewees, three were affiliated with universities and engaged in research on leadership development and fifteen had experience working with people with disabilities. Five interviewees were currently involved in programs that were tailored for people with disabilities. The following persons were interviewed:

*__Douglas Barber__ is Executive Vice President of Future Business Leaders of America, a national school-based leadership development program.

* Denotes a member of the Design Team.

John Bell is Director of Leadership for Youth Build USA, a national program which targets Hispanic and Afro-American youth who reside in inner cities.

William Bronston, M.D., is Director of Project Interdependence, a five state model program which is attempting to integrate youth with developmental disabilities into existing leadership programs.

David Caird, M.Ed., is a guidance counselor for Elizabeth Forward High School in Elizabeth, PA. He coordinates the MAPS program for the school.

AnnMaura Connolly is Director of Communications and Constituent Relations for Youth Service America, an umbrella organization for youth service organizations across the country.

Carl Fertman, Ph.D., is a researcher in leadership development at the University of Pittsburgh.

Vann Ford is Associate Director of Learning for Life, a program for special education students developed by the Boy Scouts of America.

Dollena Gibson is the Manager of Program Services for the Girl Scout Council of the Washington, DC, area.

***Melody Goforth** directs the Future Assets Student Talent (FAST) Program of Huntsville, AL, a leadership program for special education students which focuses on career development.

Otto Graf, M.Ed., is Principal of Mt. Lebanon High School in Pittsburgh, PA, and a founding member of the Pennsylvania Leadership Development Network.

***Claudie Grant, Jr.,** is Employment Adviser and Liaison for the Task Force on Leadership and Empowerment for the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities.

McClellan Hall, M.Ed., is Director of the National Indian Youth Leadership Project, which is currently devising a plan to integrate youth with disabilities into its programming.

Christine M. Kwak, M.S.W., is the Assistant to the President of the National Youth Leadership Council, a national network of leadership programs which also runs residential leadership training schools.

*Denotes a member of the Design Team

*Josephine A. Long, M.P.H., is the Coordinator of the Maximizing Adolescent Potentials Program (MAPS), a school-based leadership project that targets mainstream youth.

Bonnie Nicol is a teacher at Oakland Catholic High School in Pittsburgh, PA. She directs leadership development for the school.

Faye Singh, Ph.D., is the Extension Program Coordinator at Valley State College where she specializes in developing career training for rural youth.

Alan Smith is the National Program Leader for 4-H where he is responsible for the development of leadership curricula.

Kathy Truax coordinates leadership programs for the Ridgedale YMCA of Minneapolis, MN. She currently is developing a model leadership program for youth with disabilities under a grant by the Minnesota Developmental Disabilities Council.

Ernest Yombo is the Coordinator of the Leadership Project at the Latin American Youth Center in Washington, DC.

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* Denotes a member of the Design Team.

INTERVIEWS OF EXPERTS AND PRACTITIONERS

Interviews were conducted by Phyllis Cunningham, M.A., Project Associate, and David McKinney, Ph.D., Project Manager. Interviews took an average time of 1 to 1.5 hours and most were conducted over the telephone though three were conducted in person. Telephone interviews allowed contact with the leading practitioners and researchers regardless of their location and ensured a sampling of practitioners that covered a broad demographic base. Indeed, the interviewees were representative of every region of the United States being located in ten different states and the District of Columbia (See Chart 6).

The themes and scope of the interviews varied with the expert. Some of the interviewees focused on general topics and discussed their overall philosophies of leadership and training; others talked about specific training techniques that are effective in developing leadership potential among youth with and without disabilities. These comments fell into the following categories:

- definitions of leadership;
- goals of leadership training;
- design of programming;

- delivery of programming;
- audience;
- perceptions of youth with disabilities; and
- feasibility of integrating youth with disabilities into mainstream programming.

The following generalizations can be drawn from the expert interviews as a group. These comments reinforce the findings of our literature review and support the need for leadership, empowerment, and self-actualization training for youth with disabilities in integrated settings.

Definitions of Leadership

Although the definition of leadership was tailored by interviewees to fit the target audience and objectives of their programs, we found a general consensus regarding the basic concept of leadership. All groups saw leadership as a movement from a passive position into an active role. They also agreed that this active position meant that an individual exercises leadership ability when acting independently, as well as part of a group, and that within a group, more than a single individual may be a leader. This definition of leadership was put in the context of training by Bonnie Nicol, an interviewee who coordinates a leadership training program at Oakland Catholic High School in Pittsburgh, PA. She notes that:

> Leadership training teaches students to think for themselves, develop and act on personal beliefs, and motivates them to help other people develop these skills. A leader does not necessarily take charge, but facilitates action.

Goals of Leadership Training

Again, while specific goals of existing leadership programming related to that program's objectives, we found a consensus of opinion on the overall goal of programming aimed at youth in the mainstream, at-risk, or with disabilities. The underlying goal of these programs was ***empowerment*** of the individual. John Bell, Director of Leadership Training for Youth Build USA, epitomized the comments of all interviewees on empowerment in his statement:

> Most youth feel that they have little value and/or power. By showing them that they have something to offer and giving them some control over their lives, leadership programs can

- help youth learn that they can make their lives better and influence their peers and communities.

Interviewees noted that empowerment meant a complete change in outlook. By helping individuals to take charge of their lives, empowerment affected both personal initiative and social integration. Interviewees noted that most adolescents are at a point in development when they no longer consider themselves children and are not considered to be adults by society. The purpose of leadership development and empowerment training is to develop an individual's initiative and to begin his/her integration into the adult world.

Most interviewees identified three essential areas of empowerment. They consist of the following:

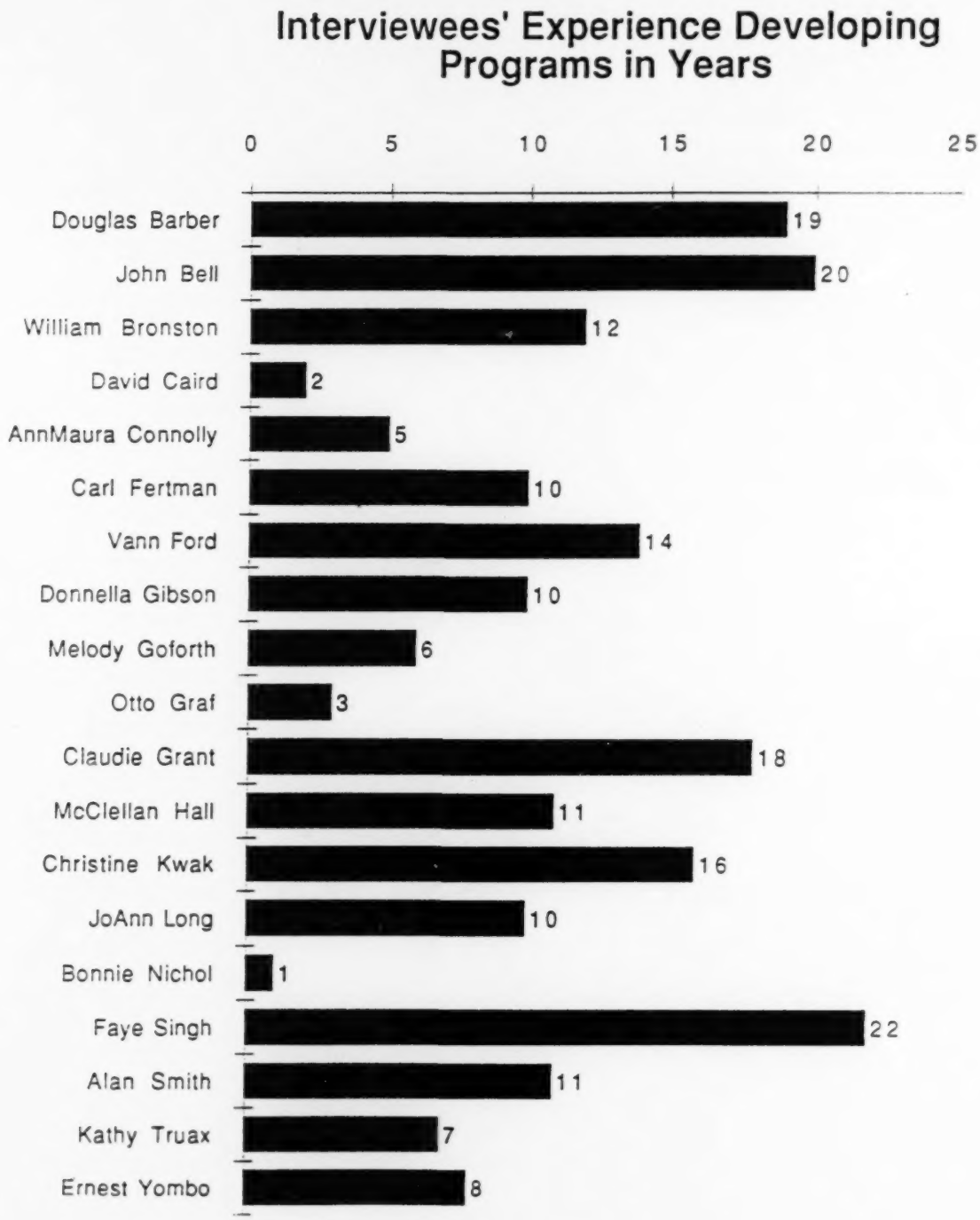
1) Personal Development
   - Self-Esteem
   - Ethics
   - Management of Emotions
   - Stress Management

2) Self-Actualization
   - Motivation
   - Initiative
   - Decision Making
   - Determining Value of Actions

3) Interpersonal Skills
   - Self-Awareness
   - Communication Skills
   - Cultural Sensitivity
   - Negotiation Skills
   - Coalition and Consensus Building

Interviewees identified the challenge of striking a balance in leadership training that would ensure the development of all aspects of empowerment. They further noted that when this balance is achieved, all elements are interdependent and that developing an element in one category reinforces the other categories. When discussing interpersonal skills, interviewees stressed the need for programming to help participants learn to reach out and understand people who are different. They noted that cultural sensitivity also included sensitivity to people of differing socio-economic status, as well as physical and mental abilities.

Chart 1


Interviewees' Experience Developing Programs in Years
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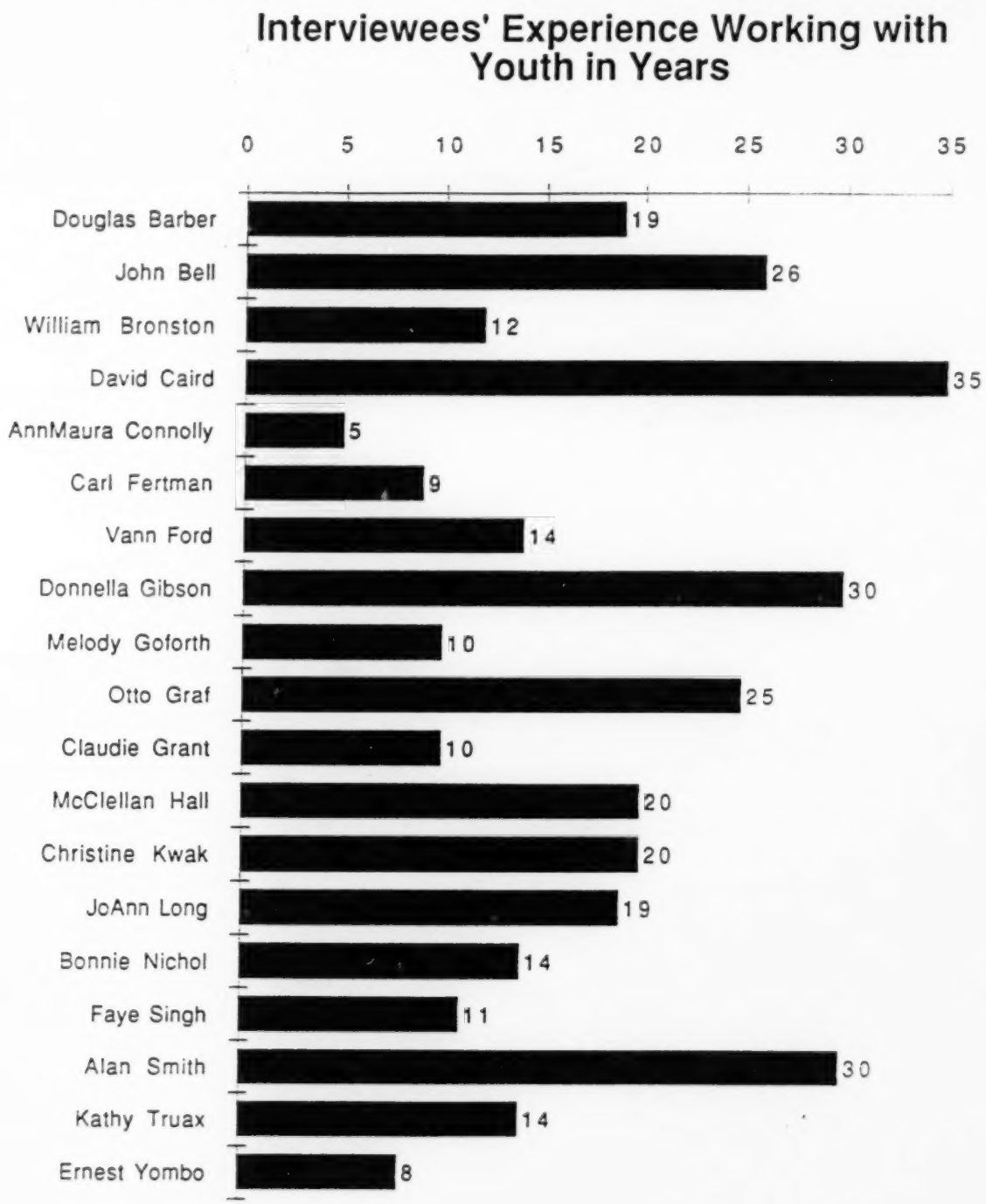
25
Douglas Barber 19
John Bell 20
William Bronston 12
David Caird 2
AnnMaura Connolly 5
Carl Fertman 10
Vann Ford 14
Donnella Gibson 10
Melody Goforth 6
Otto Graf 3
Claudie Grant 18
McClellan Hall 11
Christine Kwak 16
JoAnn Long 10
Bonnie Nichol 1
Faye Singh 22
Alan Smith 11
Kathy Truax 7
Ernest Yombo 8

Chart 2


Interviewees' Experience Working with Youth in Years
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Douglas Barber
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John Bell
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William Bronston
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35
AnnMaura Connolly
5
Carl Fertman
9
Vann Ford
14
Donnella Gibson
30
Melody Goforth
10
Otto Graf
25
Claudie Grant
10
McClellan Hall
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Christine Kwak
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JoAnn Long
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Bonnie Nichol
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Faye Singh
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Alan Smith
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Kathy Truax
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Ernest Yombo
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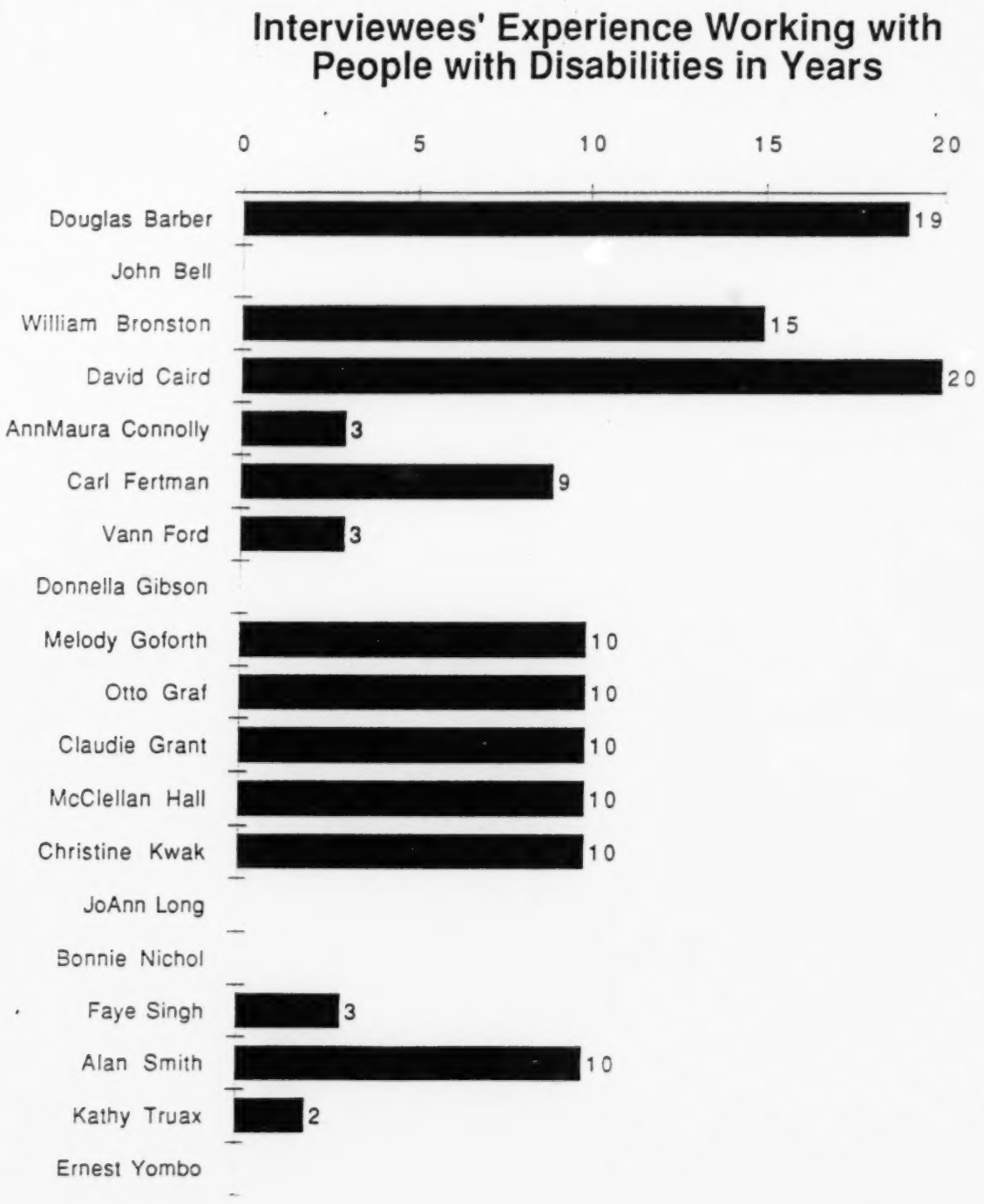
Chart 3


Interviewees' Experience Working with People with Disabilities in Years
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William Bronston
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David Caird
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AnnMaura Connolly
3
Carl Fertman
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Vann Ford
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Donnella Gibson
Melody Goforth
10
Otto Graf
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Claudie Grant
10
McClellan Hall
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Christine Kwak
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JoAnn Long
Bonnie Nichol
Faye Singh
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Alan Smith
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Kathy Truax
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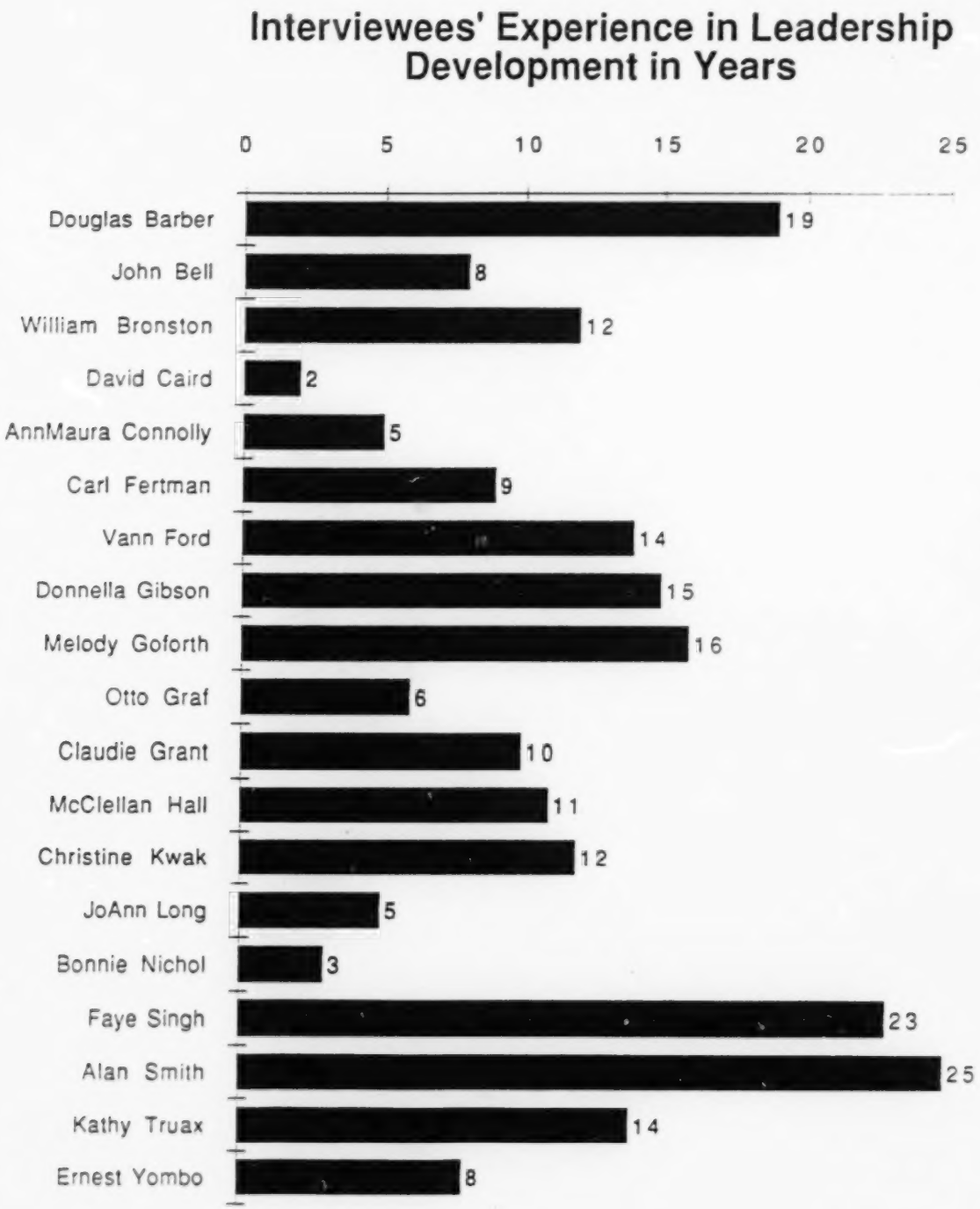
Ernest Yombo

Chart 4


Interviewees' Experience in Leadership Development in Years
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John Bell
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William Bronston
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David Caird
2
AnnMaura Connolly
5
Carl Fertman
9
Vann Ford
14
Donnella Gibson
15
Melody Goforth
16
Otto Graf
6
Claudie Grant
10
McClellan Hall
11
Christine Kwak
12
JoAnn Long
5
Bonnie Nichol
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Faye Singh
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Alan Smith
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Kathy Truax
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Ernest Yombo
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Chart 5

Comparison of Interviewees' Experience in Leadership Programming and Working with Disabilities

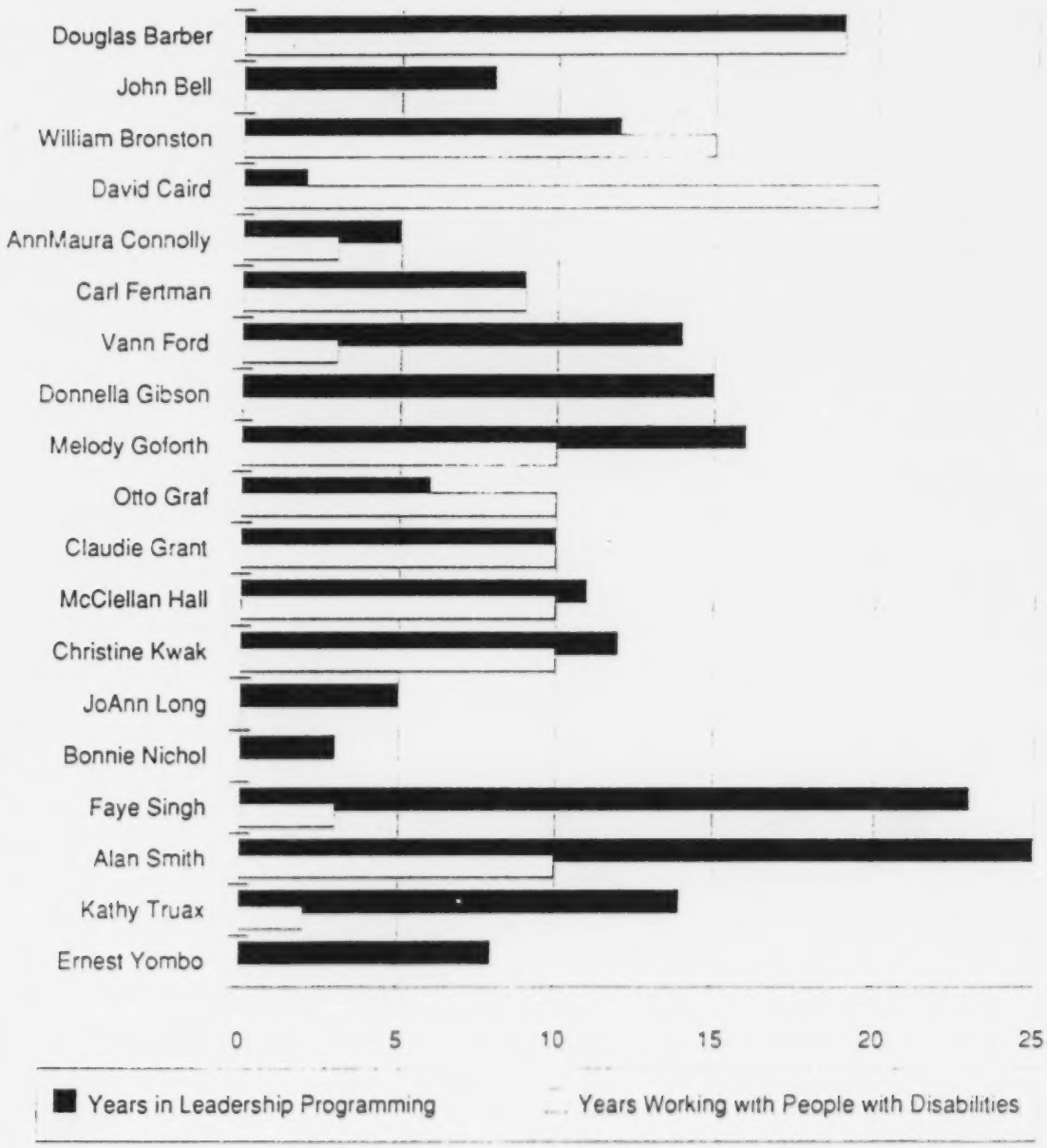
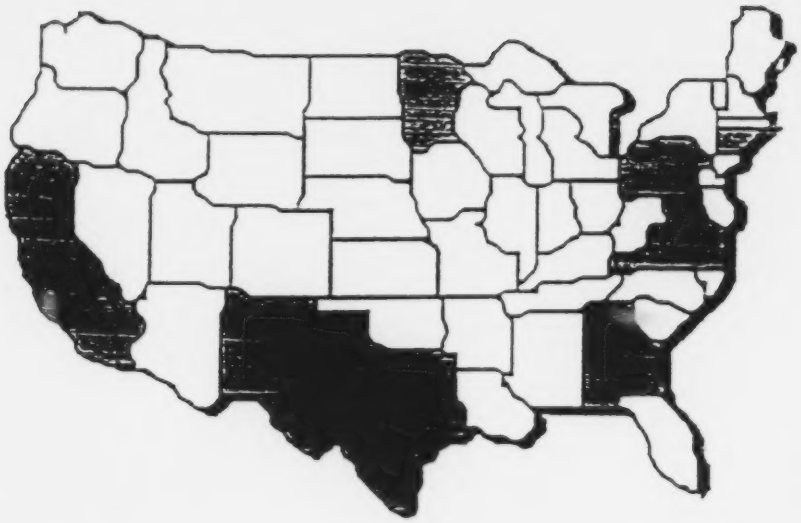


Chart 6

Interviewees by State



Home State of Interviewee

Design of Programming

When discussing the design of a training package which would help integrate youth with disabilities into existing programs, most interviewees concentrated on the means of delivery. They generally agreed that the program should be experiential and that training should be designed as a series of activities. Most cautioned against any attempt to include lectures as part of the programming. About half of the interviewees suggested that a problem-solving approach is a means both to teach specific content areas and to empower participants to apply the same process to other experiences. This point was particularly emphasized by Ernest Yombo, Coordinator of the Leadership Project at the Latin American Youth Center in Washington, DC. He noted that "most youth do not see the benefit of the abstract, but want a way to apply themselves. If you can tie training to activity, you can get youth involved."

Delivery of Programming

Of the areas of discussion with interviewees, this topic received the most diverse responses. Most of the respondents spoke anecdotally from their personal experiences in facilitating leadership programs. They principally discussed the settings in which they operated. Many programs were school-based, and the respondents from these programs concentrated on the relationship between themselves and the school administration. Others discussed how the focus of the program (e.g., community service, outward bound, etc.) shaped the delivery of leadership programming.

Audience

Responses on the audience for leadership programming were primarily determined by the selection of interviewees. Since we are targeting programs which are geared toward mainstream audiences, we did not interview programs which are tailored for gifted and talented youth. In addition, our goal of developing a component which would integrate youth with disabilities into the mainstream programming led us to interview successful leadership development programming for youth with disabilities even though their participants are restricted to this audience. We also selected specific programs like Bridges to Leadership 2000 and the National Youth Indian Leadership Council because they represented ethnic groups with a disproportionate percentage of people with disabilities.

Within these guidelines, we selected representatives from across the country. Outside of those targeting specific population groups, we discovered that most programs represented the diversity of their schools or communities. Even these programs often had a particular theme or or-

ganizing principle which set them apart. For instance, the Future Business Leaders of America is a school-based program which requires that its participants be enrolled in or have had a business course. Although some programming has specific focus, we found that this focus does not mean that the essential elements of leadership training are different. As noted by Chris Kwak of the National Youth Leadership Council, a federation of leadership organizations, "good programming is good programming, and the emphasis of national initiatives should be to develop high quality programming that lays the foundation for local or specialized initiatives."

Perceptions Concerning Youth with Disabilities

The perceptions of youth with disabilities differed with interviewees ranging from positive to ambivalent. Positive responses came primarily from those who had direct experience working or interacting with the disability community. Ambivalence seemed to be linked to lack of knowledge of what constitutes a disability. Two of the three respondents who expressed ambivalent feelings acknowledged that a lack of knowledge regarding people with disabilities probably hindered them from making their programs accessible to youth with disabilities. They also recognized the need for sensitivity training for both facilitators and participants as a prerequisite for the integration of youth with disabilities into their programs.

Among those interviewees who work exclusively with people with disabilities, the responses supported the major research. Respondents perceived youth with disabilities as less apt to show personal initiative and less likely to actively seek to integrate within a group. They noted that a contributing reason is parents and adults from the mainstream who try to protect them or who impart to them that a person in authority 'knows what is best for them.' These interviewees stressed the need for programming that teaches individuals with disabilities to act on their own behalf and that allows them an opportunity to enter the mainstream.

Feasibility of Integrating Youth with Disabilities into Mainstream Programming

The interviewees were generally positive about integrating youth with disabilities into mainstream programming, though those from mainstream programming admitted that they were not sure how to achieve integration. Among the interviewees who work with youth with disabilities, there was recognition that the disability community is the most diverse minority in the United States. They urged mainstream organizations to look at the individual and not the disability when recruiting. They noted each program is tailored toward a specific agenda and complete integration will not occur unless the person with a disability has the

interests related to the program's mission. They further noted that mainstream programs should understand the difference between ensuring accessibility and establishing two-tiered programs. They defined accessibility as creating a means to mitigate a barrier related to a disability. They emphasized that all youth have a strong sense of what is fair and that youth with disabilities want equitable (not special) treatment.

FOCUS GROUPS

Since a training package designed to integrate youth with disabilities into existing leadership programming cannot succeed unless it represents the perspectives, ideas, and opinions of the potential target audiences, VSA Educational Services participated in two focus groups before the Design Team meeting. The groups were structured to solicit student opinions regarding leadership, disability awareness, the feasibility of integrating youth with disabilities into existing leadership structures, and effective strategies for accomplishing such integration. Data derived from the initial sessions were summarized for the Design Team.

First Focus Group

The first focus group was conducted jointly by the President's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities and the Bridges to Youth Leadership 2000 Program of Howard University. It consisted of 24 youth (14 female, 10 male) ranging from 11 to 19 years of age. The participants represented a middle, a junior high, and two senior high schools in Washington, DC. All the participants had disabilities. The meeting had two parts. The first segment examined whom they perceived as leaders, how these youth saw their futures, and how they hoped to prepare for their future. The second part of the meeting was to raise their consciousness about the possible barriers caused by their disabilities and ways to mitigate the barriers. According to Mr. Carl Douthitt, Research Assistant at the Center for Disability and Socioeconomic Policy Studies at Howard and a facilitator for the group, the purpose of the first segment was to determine the level of self-determination that the youth possessed and then the second segment to inspire them to begin acting on their own behalf.

Mr. Paul Hippolitus, Director of Projects and Services for the President's Committee, asked the group whom they considered leaders in their communities. The group responded by naming professions like teachers, doctors, ministers, and politicians. The respondents were then asked how they thought these people became leaders and/or came into their positions. They responded 'by going to school.' One individual stated that people moved into these professions 'by being rich.'

Mr. Hippolitus then asked the students what careers they would like to pursue when they leave school. The responding students stated that they wanted to be a 'doctor, minister, attorney, teacher, barber, child psychologist, and computer technician.' When Mr. Hippolitus asked these students how they would prepare for these careers, the students were unaware that their schooling would affect their future career or how to prepare for a future job. Only the youth who wanted to be a barber knew that he needed specialized training.

A third question was directed to those participants who had not responded. Mr. Hippolitus asked them if they planned to work when they left school. Everyone responded that they would find a job. When asked how they would go about it or what they needed to get a job, the group at first had no response. Mr. Hippolitus then asked them about experience and references. Again, they had no response until prompted.

According to Mr. Douhitt, the lack of response does not indicate that the participants are incapable of responding. Rather, the idea of setting one's own course is virtually alien to them. They have been taught to accept first by their parents and subsequently by their teachers a charted course which is usually revealed to them on a step-by-step basis so that these youth are not really aware of the ultimate goal of schooling.

During the second half of the session, the participants were shown a video-tape chronicling the career development paths of three individuals with disabilities. The participants were exposed to decision-making processes that each of the featured individuals used and the problem-solving skills that were needed to mitigate barriers that might prevent the achievement of goals. The purpose was to expose youth with disabilities to practical issues of independent living and provide role models who are acting and living independently.

Second Focus Group

This focus group involved ten participants (6 female, 4 male) in the Washington, DC, Service Corps. Phyllis Cunningham and David McKinney served as facilitators with Stephanie Peterson acting as the recorder. One person had a disability. Discussion began by asking them to name people whom they considered leaders. Three people named specific individuals--Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Joe Amsterdam (the head of the Service Corps). Others named the categories of pastors, politicians, and rappers.

When asked what made these people different, the group named the following characteristics: commitment to a cause; ability to be open-minded; willingness to do hands-on work; insight; ability to be an active listener; self confidence; strong communication skills; cultural sensitivity; marital status; and social status.

After these general questions on leadership, we asked them to talk about their own leadership experience within the Service Corps and important considerations for a person who is leading a group. They gave the following responses: respect everyone regardless of level; empower the members of a group with specific responsibilities; create an environment in which everyone feels a part of the organization; and make the atmosphere friendly.

The next question asked what is the best way to bring people with disabilities into their groups. They responded stating: no special treatment should be given, but that everybody should get a chance to try everything (the current practice is that all duties rotate among each member of a service group); offer assistance if they ask; don't offer sympathy. Following up, we asked them what sort of advice should be given to the nondisabled. They responded: be yourself; watch what you say; talk with the individual with a disability; don't look at someone as a person with a disability.

We also solicited their advice to people with disabilities. They advised people with disabilities to: think highly of themselves; learn how to take criticism; and not to feel sorry for themselves.

We then inquired about their individual experiences with people with disabilities. They talked about general discomfort when interacting with people with disabilities. From this discussion, it became clear that the participants knew theoretically how to include youth with disabilities into the group, but they did not know how to deal with feelings of discomfort. Indeed, members of the group expressed embarrassment for this awkward feeling and acknowledged that they did not know how to move beyond this feeling.

The final segment asked them to explore how they would facilitate the integration of people with disabilities into the DC Service Corps. They offered the following suggestions: assemble small groups of people to talk about problems and solutions; make certain that responsibilities and expectations are equitable for everybody; create projects that research disabilities and disability issues.

DESIGN TEAM MEETING

After completing the review of the literature, the interviews, and two focus groups, we synthesized our findings in preparation for the Design Team meeting. We selected participants for the Design Team meeting and established an agenda for the meeting. We chose participants because of their expertise in leadership development, program development, disability related programming, experience working with youth,

experiences in cultural diversity, and research in leadership and human development. (A summary of this information is included in Chart 7.)

To fully acquaint the Design Team members with the scope of the feasibility study, we wrote a report summarizing our findings to date for distribution to participants. This report was intended to focus the attention of the participants on issues identified during the research phase and stimulate discussion at the meeting.

The Design Team was charged with three specific objectives:

- To investigate the specific issues involved in promoting leadership among youth with disabilities and to fully integrating them into the leadership structures of schools, employment settings, and communities;
- To determine the content of a disability-awareness training package for leadership programs; and
- To develop a preliminary design for a self-training package that may be used by mainstream leadership programs and that will help them integrate youth with disabilities into their ranks.

The Design Team members are:

Douglas Barber is Executive Vice President of Future Business Leaders of America, a national school-based leadership development program.

Dorotea Bryce is the Coordinator of the Bridges to Youth Leadership 2000 Program, a leadership and self-determination program for minority youth, sponsored by the Resource Training Center for Disability and Socioeconomic Policy Studies at Howard University.

William Campagna is Leadership Coordinator for Project Interdependence, a five state model program which is attempting to integrate youth with developmental disabilities into existing leadership programs.

Jack Campbell is the Coordinator for Project Empower, a leadership program for youth with disabilities sponsored by the Prince George's (Maryland) Private Industry Council, Inc.

Jeannie Cummings is the Director of a school-based leadership program for youth with and without disabilities sponsored by the Arc of Northern Virginia.

Phyllis Cunningham is the Project Manager for *Project PARTnership*, a transition and self-actualization program for adolescents with disabilities, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and Very Special Arts.

Melody Goforth directs the Future Assets Student Talent (FAST) Program of Huntsville, Alabama, a leadership program for special education students which focuses on career development.

Claudie Grant, Jr., is Employment Adviser and Liaison for the Taskforce on Leadership and Empowerment for the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities.

Carolyn Harris, Ph.D., is the Director of Special Projects and Evaluation for VSA Educational Services.

Dollena Jones is the Assistant Coordinator of the Bridges to Youth Leadership 2000 Program, a leadership and self-determination program for minority youth, sponsored by the Resource Training Center for Disability and Socioeconomic Policy Studies at Howard University.

Josephine A. Long, M.P.H., is the Coordinator of the Maximizing Adolescent Potentials Program, a school-based leadership project for mainstream youth.

David McKinney, Ph.D., is manager of the *Exceptional Leadership* project for VSA Educational Services.

Mark Reynolds, Ph.D., is Vice-President for Program Development at VSA Educational Services and Principal Investigator for the *Exceptional Leadership* project.

Freddye Webb-Petett is the Director of Leadership Programs for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

So that the Design Team could realistically address the objectives of the meeting, the group first discussed the different definitions of leadership and came to a consensus in regard to a broad definition of the term. The group agreed that leadership is a movement from a passive position into an active role and that this definition applies to an individual who acts independently or in a group. Inherent in this definition is the belief that all individuals have the ability to be leaders.

After defining leadership, the group discussed the goals of leadership programming. This discussion was focused on programs that target regular students. After much discussion, the group summarized the overall goals of leadership programs as:

- Education
- Empowerment
- Involvement

When discussing these components, the group noted subcategories and also emphasized that the main components are interdependent with each segment reinforcing another aspect of the training.

The discussion then turned to the means to facilitate the integration of youth with disabilities into existing leadership programming. The group noted that the process began with the administration of the program. They emphasized that the administration must be enticed to buy into the integration process and that it is incumbent on the proposed training package to show them the benefits of integration, demonstrate that it is simple to achieve, and give them a step-by-step means to achieve integration.

The group also noted that the integration process begins first with addressing the fears of the administration, dispelling the myths about disability, and interpreting the jargon of disability legislation. Questions about individual disabilities; insurance and liability; accessibility; and accommodation in terms of eligibility and requirements must be addressed. Examples of typical issues to address include:

- The fear that the introduction of people with disabilities will lower the quality of programming;
- The fear that facilitators cannot 'handle' youth with disabilities; and
- The fear by facilitators of their own reactions to working or even seeing youth with disabilities.

To alleviate these fears, the group suggested that disability awareness training should begin with the facilitator. According to the group, this training should include the following steps:

- Exploration of disability issues;
- Formation of community partnership with an individual from the disability community;
- Undertaking of an experiential exercise which is consciousness-raising;
- Gradual expansion of this exercise to involve the community.

After identifying these issues, the group noted that before most programs could successfully integrate youth with disabilities into their ranks, a basic change has to occur in the thinking of program leaders. Instead of creating projects *for* youth with disabilities, facilitators should work *with* youth with disabilities to create projects.

The first afternoon session looked at specific content areas for the training component. This discussion began by addressing the overall approach. Elements of the overall approach are:

- Looking at disability as a metaphor and talking about integration or inclusion of youth with disabilities into existing programs as an extension of basic civil rights;
- Creating the proper environment by establishing an atmosphere of trust;
- Explaining group dynamics to participants; and
- Exploring commonalties.

The final session of the day discussed the delivery components. After a general discussion, the group suggested a video which showed individuals succeeding in leadership programming and illustrated how basic exercises could enhance the integration of youth with disabilities into program activities. Accompanying this video would be a manual which would outline a specific curriculum and give tips in facilitating the program component.

PRELIMINARY DESIGN DOCUMENT

After identifying the content areas and delivery mechanism in the Design Team meeting, we developed an initial design for the disability awareness component to complement existing leadership programming. This process involved intensive review and discussions of the Design Team's recommendations with experts and interviewees. We then sent an initial draft of the design document to the Design Team and to the interviewees for further comment. These findings are incorporated in this study.

Chart 7

Background of Design Team Members by Category

Design Team Member	Leadership Programming	Program Development	Disability Related Programming	Experience with Youth	Experience in Cultural Diversity	Researcher/University Affiliation
Douglas Barber	•	•	•	•	•	
Dorothea Bryce	•		•	•	•	•
William Campagna	•	•	•	•		
Jack Campbell	•	•	•	•		
Jeannie Cummings	•	•	•	•		
Phyllis Cunningham	•	•	•	•	•	
Melody Goforth	•	•	•	•		
Claudie Grant	•	•	•	•	•	
Carolyn Harris	•	•	•	•	•	
Dollena Jones	•		•	•	•	•
JoAnn Long	•	•		•		•
David McKinney	•	•	•	•	•	
Mark Reynolds	•	•	•	•	•	
Freddye Webb-Petett	•	•		•		

Chapter 3

Design Plan

The product articulated in this chapter represents a self-contained training package which may be incorporated in existing leadership programming. The proposed training package is intended to enhance the leadership qualities of youth with and without disabilities by demonstrating that the skills needed for leadership development are universal and may be developed by everyone. It addresses the basic concepts of leadership training and how they may be adapted to make programming inclusive of youth with disabilities.

As will become evident by reviewing this preliminary design, *Exceptional Leadership* (our tentative title) is based on the principal definition and goals of leadership (as identified in our research) that are held by existing leadership organizations which target mainstream youth. Our overall approach is to demonstrate how the themes of *self-actualization* and *empowerment* can be used to integrate youth with disabilities as full participants in leadership programming. The foundation of this program is to acknowledge the realities of existing programming that were articulated in our interviews with experts and to present specific information and practical techniques that will stimulate awareness and result in the integration of youth with disabilities into mainstream programming. In developing this product, we hope to expand the thinking of facilitators, mainstream participants, and youth with disabilities so that leadership initiatives nationwide may become truly inclusive.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The intended target audience for the training package is the leadership programs (both school-based and independent) which seek to teach leadership skills to regular students. This audience includes, but is not limited to programs for at-risk populations. To be successful, this package must be engineered to address the attitudinal barriers of three distinct groups:

- **Program Facilitators or Advisers.** Since many facilitators and advisers of mainstream programming have had limited contact with people with disabilities, they are uncertain how to address attitudinal barriers, accessibility issues, and questions of programmatic adaptations. They need a step-by-step process that

shows them how to prepare their programs, their staffs, and themselves for integrated settings.

- **Mainstream Participants.** Most youth in leadership programs consider people with disabilities as a homogeneous group who are to be served by special projects. Mainstream participants need to be aware that the disability community is the largest and most diverse minority in the United States and that youth with disabilities are more like mainstream adolescents than they are different.

- **Youth with Disabilities**. Youth with disabilities often view their mainstream peers as secure in their social roles. The training package will show that most adolescents are struggling to become independent and to take charge of their lives. It will also demonstrate how the self-actualization process benefits from interaction among peers.

The proposed training package will be designed to address concerns of these three constituencies including content and activities structured to dispel myths and stereotypes. The package will then involve the participants in activities that will demonstrate their similarities and help them build personal relationships through group projects.

CONSIDERATIONS

The research activities undertaken during Phase 1 of this project and described in this report emphasize the practical realities of leadership training for youth with and without disabilities. In addition to helping youth to build specific skills, leadership programming must also help them to change their attitudes about themselves and others. These characteristics of the target audiences mandate that our proposed training package be built on cutting-edge research and will treat attitudes held by both facilitators and program participants. In addition, this package must be presented in a way that both facilitators and participants see its relevance to their leadership development needs. To address these considerations, VSA Educational Services has designed a package and training approach which are:

- **Well Researched.** In order to successfully treat the issues related to integrating youth with disabilities into existing leadership programming, VSA Educational Services had to determine both the state-of-the-art and the practical realities of leadership training. As demonstrated throughout this report, we have conducted an extensive review of the current literature on leadership and on related fields of empowerment and self-actualization. In addition, we have worked firsthand with numerous experts and practitioners in the

fields of leadership, education, human development, and disability to broaden our understanding of the nature of leadership training, the kinds of strategies which work well with mainstream and exceptional youth, the concerns of facilitators, and the management of programming for inclusive settings. This investigation encompassed the role of ethnic and cultural issues as they relate to leadership and disability. The themes, content, and approaches identified in this research reflect the most current theories of leadership, education, and psychology and are reflected in the design of our proposed training package.

- **Practical.** While research and theory must be the foundation for the training package, the material must be presented in a way that can be adapted to specific situations in each leadership program. To this end, the content, approach, and format of the proposed package have been selected and designed with a goal of experiential training and activities which can be easily tailored to individual circumstances.

- **Innovative.** Instead of just giving the facts about prevalent disabilities and questions of access, the training package will provide experiential exercises designed to explore issues related to full inclusion. These exercises allow for youth with and without disabilities to understand each other's prejudices, stereotypes, and concerns. These exercises will also be designed to build trust and interdependence between youth with and without disabilities and to open communications channels to ensure the growth of interpersonal relationships, as well as enhancing leadership skills. In addition, the training package will explore cultural issues and will show how diversity actually enhances group dynamics and broadens educational experiences for everyone. Like leadership training, the package employs proactive experiences which allow the students to work at their desired pace.

- **Convenient.** Our research indicates that the training package must be easy to implement if it is to be successful. To achieve this, we have designed the product as a step-by-step process in which facilitators first come to grips with their apprehension about reaching out to people who are different and then help participants to explore their own feelings. Each step will contain suggestions for adapting the program so that the facilitators may incorporate specific themes related to the mission of their particular program.

In meeting these criteria, VSA Educational Services has developed a preliminary design document for a training package which will allow most mainstream organizations to broaden the scope of their recruitment and

programming. As will be demonstrated in the guiding principles for development, the inclusion of youth with disabilities will complement the mission of any leadership program and benefits youth with and without disabilities.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Throughout the literature review and discussions with experts and practitioners, certain concepts emerged that shape the content, approach, and underlying philosophy of leadership development. Principal among these is the belief that attitudes are as important as knowledge or skills for success in leadership and in integrating youth with disabilities into existing programs. The Design Team firmly expressed that the training package should address attitudinal barriers in the minds of the facilitators and youth with and without disabilities. They argued that the entire design and approach of the package must reflect and reinforce some very fundamental attitudes regarding basic rights of access to programming and the means to achieve full integration. They identified the following principles as a means to facilitate the inclusion of youth with disabilities into existing leadership programming.

- **Leadership training benefits all youth.** Instead of regarding leadership training as the purview of only the gifted or talented, specialists in education, leadership, and human development now recognize the benefits of leadership development for all youth. Indeed, these specialists believe that the best settings for leadership development are integrated situations that reflect the 'real world.' In addition, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that most organizations make their programming accessible to youth with disabilities. However, this law sets out much more than just a series of requirements. It reinforces the missions of most mainstream leadership programming by expressing a philosophy that says all people have equal opportunities. In looking to fulfill their legal obligations, leadership programming should consider disability as a metaphor for the extension of basic civil rights. The facilitators should see the barriers that prevent full participation by youth with disabilities as an infringement on these young people's right to become full and contributing citizens.

- **Integrating youth with disabilities into mainstream programs means ensuring accessibility not lowering standards.** Each leadership organization is selective among mainstream students, and a selection process should also be employed in recruiting youth with disabilities. Recruitment and inclusion into a program should consider the abilities and interests of individuals--not a particular disability.

However, this selection process should not include arbitrary barriers like physical barriers (an activity such as hiking or mountain climbing which a program facilitator may consider inappropriate for an individual with a disability) and attitudinal barriers (patronizing or negative attitudes which limit the potential of people with disabilities to participate). The selection process should evaluate the potential benefits of participation for the individual and for the group.

- **A wide range of abilities exists in every group.** Each individual has a set of strengths and weaknesses, and disparities among individuals are the rule rather than the exception. Including youths with disabilities into existing programming merely expands the range of abilities; it does not change the nature of the program or the process of activities. If program facilitators learn to view the integrated setting as a group of youth with varying talents, the program will be more positive and more likely to be innovative in developing projects and working toward group goals.

- **The success of integrated settings depends on knowing the individual participants and what to expect of them.** For most existing leadership programs, the target audience has been identified by strengths, needs, or interests. From this knowledge, programming and activities are designed. To adapt programming and activities for youth with disabilities, clear, concise information about prevalent disabilities and associated physical or mental characteristics is necessary to *demystify* disability and help to integrate these youth into the organization. However, the disability is only part of an individual's profile, and youth with disabilities should be considered as individuals first with specific talents and needs. *Understanding the nature of a disability is just the beginning of getting to know an individual.*

- **Leadership programs should build community coalitions that include disability organizations.** To ensure that they are operating without attitudinal or physical barriers and are reaching potential participants among youth with disabilities, leadership programs should identify individuals, agencies, and organizations which can help them extend their programming. Such coalitions help everybody by involving people with disabilities as participants and not as passive recipients.

- **Successful programming begins by creating an atmosphere of trust.** Adolescents are reluctant to reach out to others or to embark on new endeavors unless they believe that they are in a 'safe haven.' Many youth with or without

disabilities conform to a fad or to peer group to achieve this sense of safety. This practice teaches adolescents to seek friends who are 'just like themselves' and magnifies differences between youth with and without disabilities. The challenge of successful integration is to help youth to work with each other and learn to trust one another. Once trust is achieved, students are more apt to rely less on passive conformity to fads, gangs, etc., venture into untried areas, and develop a sense of personal empowerment.

- **Leadership programs should expect their participants to succeed.** The expectancy theory of motivation states that the higher the expectancy of meeting a goal, the greater the motivation to perform the required actions to meet that goal. Conversely, a perception that an individual cannot achieve a goal leads to the individual disengaging from activities aimed toward that goal and leads to a motivational deficit. If youth with and without disabilities are expected to work together to achieve specified objectives, they are more likely to support each other and work collectively in meeting goals.

In reading these guiding principles, most facilitators and participants of leadership organizations aimed at mainstream youth will identify elements of existing programming. They will recognize that the skills developed in their programs can benefit most individuals and that everyone brings a unique set of talents to a project. They will also begin to see that the inclusion of youth with disabilities into their programs is a natural extension of their missions.

PRODUCT TO BE DEVELOPED

During Phase II of this project, VSA Educational Services will develop a set of complementary training materials which will supplement existing leadership programming. Our goal is to provide sufficient structure and content that most leadership organizations can tailor the training package to pre-existing themes or use the training package as a self-contained program. The package will be custom designed and professionally produced. The individual elements of the package are:

- **Accessibility Inventory** -- Intended for administrators and facilitators of leadership programs, this guide introduces accessibility as a *mind set* and not an arbitrary requirement. This guide shows how attitudes are the primary barriers to the integration of youth with disabilities into mainstream programs. Personal and organizational accessibility inventories will reveal attitudes held by the staff of programs (of which they may even be unaware) and show facilitators how to adapt the training package for use with volunteers and

staff. Principally, this guide teaches facilitators and administrators that it is not enough to say that a program does not discriminate by empowering them to actively recruit people with disabilities. After addressing attitudes, a second segment covers the common questions related to the inclusion of people with disabilities (How to mitigate physical barriers, questions about liability, how to adapt activities, etc.). This guide lists resources which may be helpful in determining accessibility and provides suggestions about forming coalitions with the disability community in order to enhance integration of youth with disabilities. A concluding section will provide step-by-step training for facilitators on how to conduct the training package as part of their existing programming.

- **Videotape** -- The videotape will focus the attention of the participants and facilitators on the possibilities presented by inclusive programming. All the major content areas (as described below) will correspond to the video, and the supporting print materials will give step-by-step methods to translate what is seen on the screen into activities for participants. Video footage will feature realistic scenarios so that participants will recognize themselves and learn to examine both their feelings and their preconceptions. A variety of techniques (freeze-frame, stills, graphics, and boxed images) will contribute to the professionalism of the video.

- **Facilitator's Guide** -- The Guide will provide step-by-step lesson plans which are structured in units that correspond to the major content areas (see below) and to the videotape. Within each unit, there will be specified objectives, a content outline and teaching points, discussion questions, suggested activities or exercises (easily adaptable for a range of situations), and blackline masters for reproduction as handouts.

- **Participant's Handbook** --The handbook will be designed as a means to stimulate individual thought and discussion about the content areas. In addition to content tied to the videotape, the handbook will also give examples of activities or projects which the participants may undertake as a group, individually, or even outside the leadership programming.

PRODUCT DESIGN

Since the proposed training package is intended for use by a wide variety of leadership programs, the Design Team decided that the training should be created so it could be implemented as a stand alone program or integrated into existing programming. This innovative approach will

provide facilitators with a complete package which can be tailored to meet the demands of each chapter or organization.

When implemented as a stand alone program, the training package will be a 12 week program consisting of 12 lessons and organized in three units. (Highlights of a sample lesson follow the Major Content Areas below.) Each week a topic will be introduced by the video segment and followed by activities that facilitate discussion among participants. In addition, the participants handbook will outline an exercise for individuals to undertake over the course of the week and which will help them delve into personal and interpersonal issues related to the segment.

Instruction for tailoring the training package to existing programming will be outlined in the Facilitators' Guide. Accompanying the learning objectives for each segment will be directions on how to adapt the segment without diminishing its effectiveness. Additionally, the activities will be ranked so that the facilitators can easily determine which ones are closest to the goals on the tailored session. This built-in flexibility also will allow for the facilitators to add components so the training package may be used as refresher or advanced training in subsequent years.

To ensure that the package design is pedagogically sound, we will continue our partnerships with the Education School at the University of Pittsburgh, the national office of Future Business Leaders of America, the Arc of Northern Virginia, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. These organizations will participate in the design, field testing, and evaluation phases. (The extent of their participation is outlined in Chapter 4.)

MAJOR CONTENT AREAS

In outlining the major content areas for the training package, the Design Team determined that the package should reflect the same basic tenets of most leadership training. They noted that the content should first inform participants why differences make everyone uncomfortable, empower them to overcome this discomfort, and provide a means for participants to become actively involved in dispelling the discomfort first within the leadership program and subsequently in their schools and communities.

As demonstrated in the following overview of content areas, these areas are designed to follow the progressive leadership development steps of education, empowerment, and involvement.

It Takes All Kinds

This unit examines the nature of differences and how we are constantly creating, mitigating, and reacting to them. It will demonstrate that the use of differences to separate ourselves into a clique or to prevent a person from being involved in an activity or a group is detrimental to both people within and outside of a clique since this behavior causes individuals to distrust those people who diverge from '*our*' norm. The unit will also show how we establish arbitrary barriers or differences by the language which we use. The strategy behind this unit is to begin with non-threatening differences (e.g., eye color, hairstyles, etc.) then move to less comfortable ones (e.g., ethnicity, religion, disability, etc.). This progression will show how attitudes creep into our thinking until we transform individual differences into barriers which inhibit communications and social interaction. We will conclude this segment by demonstrating how these barriers actually infringe on civil rights and how ensuring basic access to programs and participation is simply accepting everyone as a human being. Subdivisions of this unit are:

Sometimes I Don't Know Myself!
What's wrong with being *selective?*
Why do my actions change when I am in different groups?
How do I maintain my identity in a group?

It's Nothing Personal

This unit challenges participants to examine their own feelings about people who are different from themselves. It asks them to contrast these feelings against what they think. At this point, issues on disability are fully introduced with background on various disabilities, definitions of related terms, and discussion of attitudes and feelings regarding disabilities. This unit then challenges mainstream participants to examine their experience with people with disabilities and weigh whether they acted according to their feelings or their knowledge of disability. After this self-examination, the unit leads participants to develop a means to work through their insecurities about people who are different. The segment begins with a situation in which all participants can identify and then explores their feelings about working with disabilities. It then illustrates how to create an action plan to eradicate discomfort. By creating a plan with specified goals, this segment begins the empowerment process by identifying the sources of discomfort and a means to mitigate these feelings. Subdivisions of this unit are:

Why do individual differences make me uncomfortable?
Why don't my feelings reflect what I think?
Are people with disabilities as different as they seem?
How do I get beyond a person's disability?

Let's Work Together

The final unit encourages first-hand involvement among participants in the organization and subsequently in their communities. The unit looks at changes in the program from the individual's point of view. Participants are asked how to make the program more accessible by looking at their own behavior toward people who are different. It shows that accessibility means breaking down attitudinal barriers held by youth with and without disabilities. This unit also helps youth begin to build a set of expectations for themselves and others. Subdivisions of the segment are:

Am I accessible to other people?
How do I reach out to someone without being rejected?
How far should I go to accommodate an individual?
What happens if I ask someone to try harder?

Like previous content areas, these sessions begin with introspection and then encourage the individuals to apply these same exercises within the group. For example, by first determining whether "I" am accessible to other people and then creating a plan to make "myself" more open, the individual participants lay the foundation for making the group accessible. The activities within the segments of the final content area will demonstrate that group dynamics depend on the values and skills of individuals. By helping participants examine their own feelings and develop positive attitudes, these activities will show how an individual's outlook affects other people. Through awakening participants to the prevalence of diversity in every part of their lives, the training package will demonstrate that the broadening of their experience to include youth with and without disabilities brings new possibilities for personal growth and for a stronger community. The realization of this goal will provide youth with and without disabilities with the skills needed to begin their integration into adult society, and the concluding activities will be designed to build interpersonal skills through projects that take place within their communities.

SAMPLE SEGMENT: ***Sometimes I Don't Know Myself***

Highlights from this segment of Unit 1: *It Takes all Kinds* are given below to indicate how the topics will be covered and how the training materials will work in tangent to educate and empower the participants.

VIDEO: *Building Blocks*

How does an individual define him/herself? It is usually by our ethnicity, school, friends, extra-curricular activities, and even by our type of dress. In this video segment, a skit will demonstrate

how these elements can separate an individual from others and affect how we view our peers.

This scene opens with a person sorting through a pile of bricks. On each brick, there is a label (e.g., Protestant, Catholic, Black, White, etc.). The person selects the bricks which best describes him/herself and tosses the others over his/her shoulder where they are caught by other individuals. Everyone takes the bricks that they have selected and begins building a wall. As the person sorts through the pile, the labels become more arbitrary, and the individual is confronted with whether this is a label which he/she wants to accepts. Some bricks will be tossed around by the individuals two or three times before being rejected by everyone. Some bricks will be sought after by all. By the end of the skit, the walls built by each of the individual in the video will completely box them in and separate them from the world.

After the walls are built, the individuals will look at all the labels that they have chosen. They will compare their boxes with the others and read the outside labels the others' boxes. On hearing other people reading the labels on the outside of their walls, each individual realizes that bricks sometimes have two labels--one which is visible on the inside of the wall and a totally different label that appears on the outside (e.g., athlete/dumb jock, brilliant/know-it-all, etc.) Some will be pleased with both labels; some will be puzzled. The individuals who are bemused will ask out loud: "Is that who am I?" and "Do people really see me that way?"

DISCUSSION: *Who are* THOSE *people?*

Following the video selection, the facilitator will ask for reactions. Discussion will center on how we create our own image and how it is judged or misjudged by others. After discussing these aspects of human behavior, the discussion will show how both our own definition of ourselves and judgment of others prevent us from getting to know ourselves and other individuals.

ACTIVITY 1: *You're In! You're Out!*

This activity is designed to show how many labels may be applied to an individual, how everyone is subject to arbitrary designations, and how these designations are used to exclude individuals as well as to include them. Different types of groups will be named first by the facilitators and subsequently by participants. Those who belong to those groups will move into a circle with the rest of those participants standing outside. As part of this activity, facilitators will be encouraged to find reports and articles on youth to show how the language used to refer to youth can either be inclusive and divisive. (An example would be a manual which only uses *he*

instead of *he* or *she*.) In this and each activity, a brief discussion will allow participants to process the activity and provide closure.

ACTIVITY 2: *It's Not Who I Am!*

The activity will ask the group to name a particular personal characteristic and write it on a name tag. Throughout the activity, participants will refer to each other by that characteristic. This activity will show how each an individual feels when he or she is always 'wheelchair bound' or that 'red-head.'

PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK: *Who Am I?*

The handbook will ask each participant to take a personal inventory. First, the participant will look at him/herself, outlining desires, concerns, and aspirations. Then, the participant will identify the different groups in which he/she belongs and the ones which he or she does not belong. In the form of a journal, the participants will record their interactions among these groups--how their behavior was influenced by the group and how they felt toward people outside the group.

At the end of this and each segment, there will be a group discussion to process the activities. In addition to adding closure, participants will be asked as part of this discussion to design a plan for the program to implement what they learned from the segment.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOME

By offering disability awareness training in the context of developing self-actualization and empowerment skills advocated by most mainstream leadership training programs, the proposed training package will reinforce the total mission of leadership programming. Indeed, the training package will place awareness of disability issues in context of basic civil rights for all people. It will demonstrate that our tendency to exclude people who are different is based on insecurities about ourselves and provide a systematic way to examine and mitigate these insecurities. By teaching youth how to work beyond insecurities and not attempt to mask them, the proposed training package will help all participants to become effective leaders within their programs, schools, and communities.

Chapter 4

INDUSTRY SUPPORT

The primary goal of the proposed training package is to provide mainstream leadership organizations with the knowledge and skills to make their programming truly inclusive of youth with disabilities. In seeking to develop this package, VSA Educational Services realizes that this goal cannot be achieved without forming partnerships within the youth leadership community. To this end, we have involved the premier leadership organizations in the feasibility study and will continue these relationships throughout the development of the training package.

The partnerships described below represent several national networks of leadership organizations which have been at the forefront of developing innovative programming for mainstream youth, a pilot leadership program developed by the University of Pittsburgh, a philanthropic foundation which is the leading private source of funding for leadership programming, the youth concerns component of the President's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities, and four disability organizations that sponsor leadership, empowerment, and self-actualization training. Their work is recognized by their peers in the industry, and their involvement in the development of the proposed training package provides both expertise for development and venues for field testing of the product, as well as established reputations for high quality programming among leadership organizations across the country.

We are confident that our collaboration with these organizations in product development will lead to industry-wide support of the training package. These partnerships also advance the mission of the Department of Education's SBIR program by building a strong coalition to promote research, development, and commercial application for programming that paves the way for the integration of adolescents into the mainstream.

FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA--Phi Beta Lambda

Future Business Leaders of America--Phi Beta Lambda (FBLA) is a national association of 270,000 students interested in business or business education careers with 5,423 chapters in middle and high schools across the country. Its mission is to bring business and edu-

cation together in a positive working relationship through innovative leadership development programs. To support this mission, FBLA provides its membership with a broad range of customized programming, conferences, publications, and partnership opportunities. A school-based program, FBLA's chapters are inclusive of special education students, and both the national office and individual chapters have worked with disability groups to develop specialized programming. Recently, FBLA has developed programs for youth with Tourette's Syndrome.

FBLA participated fully throughout the feasibility study and will continue to work with VSA Educational Services in the development of the proposed training package. The involvement of FBLA falls in the following categories:

- **Technical Support.** Douglas Barber, Executive Vice-President of the FBLA, participated on the Design Team during Phase I and will continue in this position for Phase II. Specifically, Mr. Barber will provide input toward the development of the content for each segment of the program, review drafts of materials and scripts, and coordinate the training of trainers and the implementation of the programs at FBLA test sites.

- **Field Testing**. Five chapters of FBLA will serve as test sites for the programs. These sites will be chosen to reflect different demographic concerns from inner-cities to suburban and rural settings. Because of the diversity represented in FBLA chapters in the Maryland, Virginia, and District of Columbia, these sites will be selected within driving distance of Washington, DC.

- **Training of Trainers.** FBLA will underwrite and coordinate the training of trainers for the test sites at its chapters. For the convenience of facilitators, this training will occur at the FBLA National Office in Reston, Virginia.

In addition, the endorsement of FBLA will be especially important during the subsequent marketing and dissemination of the final product in Phase III.

MAXIMIZING ADOLESCENTS POTENTIALS PROGRAM

The Maximizing Adolescents Potentials Program (MAPS) is a pilot leadership project administered by the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh. Established in 1983, MAPS operates in 18 high schools throughout the inner-city, suburban, and rural areas in and surrounding Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. MAPS targets mainstream youth, who are not generally considered as leaders by themselves, their peers, and their teachers. The administrators of MAPS view the

proposed training package as an extension of their program and have worked with us throughout Phase I of the project. They have enthusiastically offered to participate in the development of the proposed packaged in the following ways:

- **Technical Assistance**. Prof. Carl Fertman, creator of the MAPS program, will assist in the writing and development of leadership content for each segment of the program, review drafts of materials and scripts, and help to ensure that the specifications training package meet the needs and complement the learning objectives of leadership programming.

- **Training of Trainers.** The MAPS program will coordinate training of facilitators for its test sites. In addition, Prof. Carl Fertman and Ms. Josephine A. Long (Coordinator of MAPS) will serve as trainers in train-the-trainer sessions.

- **Field Testing.** Selected MAPS sites will be used for field testing the proposed training package.

In addition to participation in the development of the program, the use of the proposed training package in the MAPS program will contribute to the baseline data on leadership research. The Education School of the University of Pittsburgh uses selected participants in the MAPS program for longitudinal studies. They are currently following a group of students who entered the program in 1989 and are presently in their first jobs or in their sophomore year in college. When the program is field tested in the MAPS program, researchers may be able to track both youth with and without disabilities who participated in the field test and compare their findings to the longitudinal study of the 1989 participants.

W.K. KELLOGG FOUNDATION

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation is a private philanthropic foundation which supports local, state, regional, and national leadership programming. A goal of the foundation is to help prepare leaders who can apply breadth of view in solving programs and are willing to take the lead in confronting societal issues that present no easy solution. The Kellogg Foundation recognizes that leadership manifests itself in countless ways, and the Foundation seeks to support the study and practice of leadership, as well as to strengthen the processes by which new leaders are developed.

In pursuit of these goals, the Kellogg Foundation has worked with VSA Educational Services throughout Phase I. Freddye Webb-Petett, Program Director for Leadership Initiatives, served as a member of the

Design Team. In addition, the Foundation supplied us with a list of program facilitators who reviewed a draft of the feasibility study.

The Foundation has agreed to continue this working relationship in Phase II of the program. Ms. Webb-Petett will continue to serve on the Design Team for the training package. Kellogg will also provide the following:

- **Technical Support.** As one of the leading funders and developers of leadership programming, the Kellogg Foundation underwrites cutting-edge programming and research. As a collaborator in the development of our training package, the Foundation will make available its experts on leadership development to ensure that our package reflects the state-of-the-art of leadership training.

- **Field Testing.** Through its work with leadership programming across the country, the Foundation will identify sites for testing the proposed training package.

- **Phase III Funding.** The Foundation has invited VSA Educational Services to submit a concept paper outlining dissemination and marketing of the completed project for consideration for funding of these activities.

Because of its reputation in the field for the development of innovative approaches to leadership training, the active involvement of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation will serve as a positive endorsement of the product and will call attention of leadership programs across the country to the proposed training package.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP & EMPOWERMENT TASK FORCE

A subcommittee of the President's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities, the Task Force is comprised of people with disabilities, educators, university researchers, employers, and facilitators of youth leadership programming. The Task Force is charged with identifying and enhancing opportunities for adolescents with disabilities to develop their leadership and empowerment skills. The Task Force works with both mainstream and disability-oriented organizations to develop ways to ensure that youth with disabilities are integrated in society as productive and active members.

As part of Phase 1 activities, Claudie Grant, Jr., Task Force Liaison, and Melody Goforth, a Task Force member and Director of the Future Assets Student Talent Program (a leadership program for special education students), served as members of the Design Team. During Phase II activities, members of the Task Force will review components of the training package that treat accessibility and disability issues.

The involvement of the Task Force will ensure that the training package is sensitive to the needs of youth with disabilities as they relate to leadership development and empowerment. Their involvement in the development of the package will also provide a network of community-based programs which would be willing to implement the training program.

Since the work of the Task Force involves community-based organizations throughout the entire nation, it represents a network of leadership programs and specialized resources which can be identified in the **Accessibility Inventory** component of the training package. The listing of these resources will help mainstream programs form partnerships with the disability community. This network also can be tapped for product dissemination during Phase III.

ARC OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Formerly the Association for Retarded Citizens of Northern Virginia, the Arc now works as a catalyst for the integration of people with disabilities into mainstream society. One of its current initiatives is *Project P.I.E.: Participation, Independence and Empowerment of Youth through Leadership Development.* Funded by the Federal Administration on Developmental Disabilities, this project intends to build a national network of youth leaders who are advocates for disability rights and awareness, to encourage friendships between youth with and without disabilities, and to teach all youth to use leadership skills and strategies to break down physical, communication, and attitudinal barriers. This project is conducted as a five-day camp for high school students with and without disabilities.

The involvement of Arc in this project brings first hand expertise in the development leadership-centered programming that actively seeks to develop inclusive training. They will help us identify the concerns of youth with and without disabilities about leadership development and teach facilitators of mainstream programs how to address these concerns. Jeannie Cummings, Project Coordinator for *Project P.I.E.*, will serve on the Design Team and help write the disability awareness component of the proposed training package.

PROJECT INTERDEPENDENCE

Project Interdependence is a nonprofit educational foundation which offers consultation and technical assistance to school and community youth leadership development programs to demonstrate the compelling benefits of integrating all youth into leadership training. Its principal goals are demonstrating the contribution everyone makes to

the social fabric; the benefits of eliminating physical and cultural barriers, labeling, and stereotyping; new pathways to success for all people; the promotion of school, community, and corporate resource sharing; and youth cooperative learning. The project is currently working with mainstream leadership organizations in five states as part of a pilot project sponsored by the Federal Administration for Developmental Disabilities to develop ways to integrate youth with disabilities into their programs. During Phase I, staff of Project Interdependence participated in the interview process and on the Design Team. For Phase II, William Campagna, Director of Programs, will continue on the Design Team. He will help develop the content area on working together.

PROJECT EMPOWER

Project Empower is a multi-faceted project that helps youth with orthopedic disabilities to develop self-esteem, assertiveness, communication, problem-solving, and decision-making skills. The program has its roots in a citizen-based task force convened by the Prince George's County, Maryland, Commission for Persons with Disabilities to conduct a service needs assessment of students with physical disabilities transitioning from school to adult life. The research conducted by the task force confirmed that there has been a paucity of services, activities, and training for young adults with physical disabilities who are preparing to leave the protection of the school system for college or employment. As a result of this research, the task force developed Project Empower under a three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) as a demonstration project.

The Director of Project Empower, Jack Campbell, participated in our study of leadership development options as a Design Team member and will continue in this position should we receive Phase II funding. During Phase II, Mr. Campbell will contribute to the disability awareness component and will write the self-advocacy component for students with disabilities. Mr. Campbell's experience in the areas of self-determination and advocacy skills will ensure that our training package meets the needs of youth with disabilities as they enter mainstream leadership programming.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS

Very Special Arts (VSA), the non-profit affiliate of VSA Educational Services, considers this project an important vehicle for furthering its mission to bring people with disabilities into the societal mainstream. Established in 1974 as an educational affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, VSA is designed by Congress as the

national coordinating organization on arts and disabilities. VSA has affiliate programs in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories, as well as in 55 countries around the world. Almost two million people around the world take part in VSA programs every year.

The role of VSA in the development and marketing of the proposed training project will be most evident in Phase III. An aspect of our marketing strategy is to develop a cadre of trainers drawing from VSA state affiliates around the country. Our goal is for VSA Educational Services to conduct train-the-trainer workshops in conjunction with VSA regional conferences (during summer 1995) in which representatives from each state will receive a copy of the training package, detailed instruction on leading a one-day workshop using these materials, and assistance in organizing and promoting the availability of this in-service resource to leadership organizations and schools throughout their states.

By implementing this train-the-trainer program through the VSA network, we can help VSA affiliates enhance their working relationship with mainstream organizations while also generating use of and interest in this training package by local and state leadership programs across the country. This partnership will also assist mainstream leadership programs in identifying and recruiting youth with disabilities for inclusion in their membership.

COMMERCIAL APPLICATIONS

The need for the proposed training package is indicated by the willingness of the above mentioned organizations to commit time and resources to help in its development. Indeed, this collaboration speaks directly to the viability of the product. Given the interest of national leadership programs in the product expressed during our interviews, we have decided to further investigate dissemination options during the development phase to ensure that we maximize its availability and usefulness.

VSA Educational Services already has an established relationship with the Simon & Schuster Education Group, which could serve as the national publisher for the product. Another option is to direct market the package using the networks of our collaborators. A third marketing strategy is to develop the 'generic program' which may be marketed nationally and to contact national organizations with local chapters about tailoring the programs for their specific goals. If they will guarantee that enough local chapters would purchase the package to cover costs of tailoring the program, we will design activities for the Facilitator's Guide and the Participant Manual that reflect their particular focus. (The videotape would remain the same throughout the

generic and tailored packages since it is designed to introduce issues which are examined by the group in activities.) In addition, the packaging would be changed to coincide with that organization's other publications.

As indicated by the discussion above, the possibilities for commercial applications are as diverse as the needs and uses for the program. We are confident that both the demand for and the flexibility of the proposed training package will ensure a broad market and a long shelf life for the product.

Appendix A

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY ON YOUTH LEADERSHIP

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Appendix B

INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT

Exceptional Leadership

Telephone Interview

INTERVIEWEE_____ DATE_____ [STAFF]

TITLE _____ EXPERTISE_____

PHONE_____ FAX_____

AFFILIATION_____

ADDRESS_____

_____

A. DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

A.1.	Experience in leadership programs?	[ ] YES _____YEARS WHAT TYPE?_____ _____
A.2.	Experience working with youth?	[ ] YES _____YEARS SPECIALTY?_____ _____
A.3	Experience working with persons with disabilities?	[ ] YES _____YEARS
A.4.	Experience in program development?	[ ] YES _____YEARS WHAT TYPE?_____ _____ [ ] development [ ] delivery

B. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

B.1. How do you define leadership?_____

B.2 What are the goals of a leadership program?_____

B.3 What are the most effective ways to involve youth in leadership training?_____

B.4. Are there specific skills, practices, or attitudes that develop leadership ability?_____

B.5. What are the most effective ways to impart these skills, practices, or attitudes?_____

B.6. How does your program teach participants to recognize leadership qualities in themselves and/or others?

C. AUDIENCE

C.1. How would you describe your basic constituency?_____

C.2. How do you recruit persons into your program?_____

C.3. Have persons with disabilities been involved in your programming?_____

C.4. What adaptations (if any) were made to your program to include persons with disabilities into your programming?

C.5. Do you have a policy regarding people with disabilities in your program?_____

C.6. How do you make leadership programs inclusive of persons with disabilities?_____

C.7. How do you address attitudinal barriers of teachers and/or parents which might prevent a participant from developing his/her potential?

D. DELIVERY

D.1. How is your program delivered nationally?

D.2. How is your program delivered locally?

D.3. What is the role of schools in the delivery of your program?

D.4. What type of materials are effective in delivering leadership programming?

D.5. What type of materials are effective in recruiting persons into your programs?

E. PROPOSED LEADERSHIP PROGRAM FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

E.1. Do you know of existing leadership programs for youth with disabilities or that actively include youth with disabilities into mainstream programs?

E.2. Could you use a component which would help integrate youth with disabilities into your program?

E.3 What would you envision as the content of this component?

Disability Awareness?

Recruitment Techniques?

Innovative Teaching Strategies?

Specialized Group Activities?

E.4 How would you design these aspects to appeal to youth with and without disabilities?___

F. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS